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Photo of Missing Fossils

Clue to the Peking Man

Chicago

An investment banker says he has a photograph purporting to show some of the remains of the prehistoric Peking Man, missing from China since World War II.

Christopher Janus offered a $5000 reward for information leading to the discovery of the highly prized fossils after a recent trip to China. He said in an interview here that an anonymous New York woman sent him the photo after a series of clandestine communications.

An anthropologist at the Field Museum of Natural History studied the photo under magnification and said that, if the skull is a legitimate fossil, it is that of the Peking Man — a generic term for a collection of 40 skulls, 150 teeth and numerous bones that date man back 450,000 to two million years.

MONEY

Janus said the woman wants a half million dollars for the fossils and if they are authentic, "money should be no problem."

Janus, who will make a return trip to China in October, said, "The Peking Man is like the crown jewels to the Chinese.

"I want to find out if this is a hoax. If it's not, I want to present those fossils to the Chinese when I return."

Janus said he has no way of contacting the woman. She must make the next move.

He said she arranged a meeting with him June 28 at the Empire State Building Observatory but departed hurriedly after she noticed apparent tourist taking pictures in their direction.

AD

Janus said that, after not hearing from the woman, he placed a two-line advertisement in the New York Times* asking the "Empire State Observatory Woman" to telephone him.

When she did, two days later, Janus persuaded her to send a copy of the photograph in an initial attempt to verify her story.

The woman told Janus her husband, a Marine in China, left her a footlocker containing the fossils at his death.

"She said her husband had told her the fossils were very important to the Chinese people and one of their great national treasures," Janus said.

MARINES

He said he also has learned since his announcement of the reward in June, that the fossils were packed in footlockers and given to Marines at the U.S. legation in Peking to protect them from the invading Japanese in 1941.

He said he has contacted a number of Marines who verify that story and added that they and the fossils were captured.

Janus said he also has learned that another man in Taiwan has a footlocker purportedly containing fossils of the Peking Man and that a meeting with him has been arranged.

Associated Press

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